

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 484

By Henry

A RESOLUTION to recognize Donna Nicely on the occasion of her retirement as Director of the Nashville Public Library.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those citizens who have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm throughout their careers; and

WHEREAS, Donna Nicely is one such estimable person who served with distinction for sixteen years as the Director of the Nashville Public Library and took her much deserved retirement on November 1, 2011; and

WHEREAS, as director of the Nashville Public Library, which includes the main library and twenty branch libraries, Mrs. Nicely oversaw a collection of more than 1.6 million items, including books, periodicals, DVDs, CDs, and audiobooks, and a system that offers more than 600 public-use computers, a number of art exhibits, educational programs, and events designed for all ages; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nicely also oversaw the operations of the Metro Archives, the Nashville Talking Library, and the Library Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in her capacity as director; and

WHEREAS, during her tenure as director, Mrs. Nicely spearheaded the campaign to build six new libraries – Green Hills, Madison, Hermitage, Edmondson Pike, Bordeaux, and Goodlettsville - within the Nashville Public Library system, in addition to the new main library facility, a remarkable jewel in the midst of downtown Nashville; and

WHEREAS, Donna Nicely also presided over Nashville's International Puppet Festival 2008, lent her guidance and expertise to the Bringing Books to Life! and Puppet Truck programs, and opened the doors of Nashville's libraries to the city's young minds through a

number of constructive and educational after-school programs such as *T.O.T.A.L.* (Totally Outstanding Teen Advocates for the Library) program; and

WHEREAS, included among her accomplishments are the renovation and remodeling of a number of libraries, including Pruitt, East, Thompson Lane, and Edgehill as well as the opening of the inspirational Civil Rights Room and the wonderful Special Collections Center at the Main Library; and

WHEREAS, a leader in library innovation, Mrs. Nicely oversaw the Introduction of digital formats, downloadable audio, video, ebooks and music; the remodeling of Teen Center; Job and teaching labs; and leadership in the Limitless Libraries initiative between Nashville Public Library and the Metro Nashville Public Schools that garnered attention from other cities and an Award of Recognition from the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Board of Education for her support of MNPS and her tireless efforts on behalf of Limitless Libraries; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nicely earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Boston University in 1969, a Master of Arts in Teaching degree from Emory University in 1970, a Master of Librarianship degree from Emory in 1975, and a Diploma for Advanced Study in Librarianship, also from Emory, in 1987; and

WHEREAS, her long and influential career as a librarian began in 1975, when she accepted a position with the Lake Lanier Regional Library in Lawrenceville, Georgia. In 1978, she began a seventeen-year tenure with the DeKalb County Public Library in Decatur, Georgia, where she rose to the post of director in 1991 and served in that position until 1995, when she was named the Director of the Nashville Public Library system; and

WHEREAS, during her career, her work has appeared in a number of publications, including *Public Libraries*, *The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances*, and *Library Journal*, and her expertise has been sought by a number of other library systems. Donna Nicely has consulted with the Arizona State Library, Himmel and Wilson Associates, PROVIDENCE Associates, the Montgomery County, Maryland, Department of Public Libraries, and the Advisory Committee of the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nicely has also given freely of her time and leadership abilities to a number of organizations, serving as a member of the Executive Board and the Board Chair of the Urban Libraries Council; as a member of a number of American Library Association/Public

Library Association committees, including the Public Library Association Issues and Concerns Cluster Steering Committee Board of Directors, the American Library Association Library Personnel Resources Advisory Committee, the Public Library Association Statistical Report Advisory Subcommittee which she served as Chair, the Public Library Association Leadership Development Committee which she served as Chair, the American Library Association National Conference Program Committee; and as President of the Georgia Library Association; and

WHEREAS, in fitting recognition of her expertise, she was named as one of the fifteen members of The Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy, a national panel comprised of prominent leaders in their respective fields; and

WHEREAS, possessed of a deep and abiding concern for her community, Donna Nicely has held membership in a number of civic organizations, including the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, Nashville Downtown Partnership, Country Music Foundation, Nashville's Agenda Steering Committee, Books from Birth of Middle Tennessee, Leadership Nashville, the African American History Foundation of Nashville, Inc., the Nashville Alliance for Public Education, and the Rotary Club of Nashville, to name but a few; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Donna Nicely was the recipient of the 2009 Charlie Robinson Award from the Public Library Association, a 2009 honoree of the YWCA of Nashville and Middle Tennessee's Academy for Women of Achievement, and the leading force behind the Nashville Public Library, winning the 2010 National Medal for Museum and Library Services; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Nicely exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; it is often said that A City with a Great Library is a Great City®, and it is through the unflagging dedication and hard work of Donna Nicely that Nashville is a great city; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, Donna Nicely has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of her colleagues and the grateful appreciation of the many thousands to whom the Nashville Public Library system means so much; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

CONCURRING, that we extend to Donna Nicely our heartfelt wishes for a happy and fulfilling retirement and every continued success in her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.